



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FALMOUTH

P.O. Box 450 • Falmouth, MA 02541

web: www.lwvf.org

email: league@LWVF.org

The League of Women voters, a nonpartisan national organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

Bulletin – January 2011

Member Events Calendar

January 2011

- 20 7:30 p.m. **Meeting: State Program Planning,**
Falmouth Town Hall (Dinner at Peking Palace at 6:00 p.m.)
- 25 7:30 p.m. **Board Meeting** (Board Room, Falmouth Hospital)

February 2011

- 17 7:30 p.m. **Meeting: Legislative Program,**
Falmouth Town Hall (Dinner at Peking Palace at 6:00 p.m.)
- 22 7:30 p.m. **Board Meeting** (Board Room, Falmouth Hospital)

LWVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010-2011

STEERING COMMITTEE

First Vice-President	Betsy Fontes
Second Vice-President	Barbara Kanellopoulos
Secretary	Sylvia Szulkin
President Ex-officio	Joan Boyer
Membership	Kathy Mortenson



Treasurer	Joanne Voorhis	Natural Resources	Pam Polloni
Bulletin	Judy Fenwick	Observer Corps	Deborah Siegal
Development	Sallie A. Giffen	Outreach	Landi Landrau
Legislative	Meg Borden	Publicity	Marcia Easterling
Local Study	Doris Epstein	Voter Service	Alice Carey

If you wish to join the League, membership dues are \$50.00 for an individual membership and \$25.00 for an additional household member.

Send your check made out to *LWV of Falmouth* to the address shown above.

Please include your name, address and phone number.

You do not have to be a resident of Falmouth to join.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Kathy Mortenson

Our League's membership count is now 101 members.

Please make the following changes to your 2010-2011 League membership (pale green) directory.

Add new members:

Clara Hulburt

8 Proctor Road

Woods Hole MA 02540

Yang Conley

110 Dillingham Ave- Unit 102

Falmouth MA 02540

Change email address for Joanne Voorhis to: jvoorhis@gmail.com

NEXT LWVF BOOK GROUP - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

Kathy Mortenson

The LWVF Book group met December 15 and discussed Obama's Wars. Please join us for the next discussion on Wednesday, March 16 at 3:00 pm - *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance--A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* by Danielle L. McGuire. You can request a copy of the book at the Falmouth Public Library.

Kathy Mortenson: mortensonk@aol.com or 508-457-4410

Discussions will take place at Kathy's house - 116 Pin Oak Way (downtown near Mill Road) - last house on the left.



LWVF FRIENDS FOR 2010-2011

Dorothy and Duncan Aspinwall

Frank Egloff

Sally Fritz

Avery Funkhouser

Avis and Marv Grosslein

Christina Jacobi

Susan Kingwill

Winnie and Bill Mackey

Polly Montgomery

Dorothy Ryder

Robert Schneider

Deborah G. Senft

John and Freddy Valois

Helen Wilson

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Joan Boyer

I wanted to take this opportunity to speak about our League's web page, www.lwvf.org, and particularly about *Falmouth in Focus*. We have just published the 5th Edition of FIF, but this time it is on the web instead of a printed book. It was originally published as *Falmouth Fore and Aft* in 1954, the first year of the Falmouth League.

This edition was produced by the following committee members: Chairman Deborah Siegal, Jayne Abbott, Joan Boyer, Alice Carey, Marcia Easterling, Doris Epstein, Judy Fenwick, Sallie Giffen, Barbara Kanellopoulos, Richard Payne and Judy Stetson. Sallie took some photographs around Falmouth, which are also being added. Links to most of the pertinent web pages have been included and an immense amount of information is available about Falmouth.

Also, on our web page, is the follow-up to our very successful Government in the Round program in November. Please look through all the material on the website and give me any suggestions for improvement or any corrections that come to mind.

Our January member meeting is on January 20th. Remember to log on to our website in case of a weather cancellation or phone one of the Steering Committee members. Kathy Mortenson will also send an email. **We no longer have a telephone tree to phone you about cancellations.**

Barbara Kanellopoulos will discuss the issues presented at National Convention this summer. We will also discuss State Program Planning. So come to learn about the League at the State and National level--the priorities and challenges. And don't forget dinner at the Peking Palace before the meeting.

Happy New Year!



LETTER BY THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FALMOUTH TO BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Sylvia Szulkin for the Steering Committee

The Board of Selectmen has voted to establish a nine-member search committee composed of a broad cross-section of the community to participate in the search for a new Town Manager. The search committee would be aided by a professional search firm.

In the discussion preceding their vote, the Selectmen indicated that a statement of community values would be included in the charge to the search committee. The LWVF Steering Committee has sent the Selectmen the following letter concerning community values. The list of values in the letter is intended as a starting point for discussion. The League hopes to be part of the discussion and urges its members to consider applying for a place on the search committee. Applications will become available shortly.

December 20, 2010

Mr. Brent Putnam, Chairman
Falmouth Board of Selectmen
Falmouth Town Hall, 59 Town Hall Square
Falmouth, MA 02540

Re: Search for Town Manager

Dear Mr. Putnam:

The League of Women Voters of Falmouth is very pleased that the Board of Selectmen has voted to establish a nine-member search committee to assist in the selection of a new Town Manager. We are also pleased that the Board intends to appoint residents to the search committee representing a broad cross-section of our community. Further, we applaud the Board's intention to include a description of Falmouth's community values in the search committee's charge. Identifying the town's core values will help the Board select the most suitable candidate.

An ongoing discussion of community values has been part of the LWVF's current study—"The Effectiveness of Falmouth Town Government." Community values were also explicitly and implicitly mentioned by the more than sixty residents who participated in "Government in the Round," the League's November 18, 2010 program for discussion of Falmouth's priority needs.

The League would like to contribute to the discussion of community values by offering the following concepts for possible inclusion in the search committee's charge:

1. Seek leadership that demonstrates integrity, accountability, civility, respect for opposing views and backgrounds, the ability to collaborate towards a common goal, and a commitment to follow through on one's promises
2. Seek leadership committed to
 - (a) fiscal responsibility
 - (b) protection of natural resources
 - (c) preservation of our historical heritage
 - (d) promotion of Falmouth as an innovative and progressive municipality
 - (e) implementation of Long and Short-term Strategic Plans;
 - (f) strengthening of regional planning and cooperation
 - (g) timely and effective communication from town leaders to citizens
 - (h) transparency in town government
 - (i) thoroughness and fairness
 - (j) encouraging volunteer participation Town government.
 - (k) accountability along the chain of government command and accountability to citizens seeking information and assistance from town government.
 - (l) diversity in government
 - (m) quality affordable housing

We appreciate the opportunity to be heard and stand ready to contribute further to the process of selecting a new Town Manager.

Respectfully

The Steering Committee of the League of Women Voters of Falmouth
Betsy Fontes, East Falmouth, 1st Vice-President, 508-540-9698
Barbara Kanellopoulos, Falmouth, 2nd Vice-President, 508-540-1983
Sylvia Szulkin, North Falmouth, Secretary, 508-564-4424
Kathy Mortenson, Falmouth, Membership Chair, 508-457-4410
Joan Boyer, North Falmouth, ex officio, 508-564-6644

Cc: Selectman David Braga
Selectman Mary Pat Flynn
Selectman Melissa Freitag
Selectman Ahmed Mustafa

2011 FOCUS ON TOWN GOVERNMENT

Megan Jones

In the past year there has been a great deal of discussion about our town government, specifically about the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager. In 2011 Falmouth citizens will have the opportunity to participate in two and possibly three ways to recommend changes to Falmouth's town government.

Town Manager Search Committee

The first opportunity will be by applying for the search committee for our new town manager. The Selectmen have voted to establish a nine-member search committee of citizens representative of the town and will begin selecting applicants early in the new year. The charge of the search committee will be to review resumes and conduct interviews of candidates for town manager with the assistance of a professional consultant. Names of finalists will then be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen who will review the recommendations, visit home towns and conduct interviews before making their final decision in open session. The expectation is to appoint a new town manager by early June. Nothing could be more important than appointing a highly skilled manager for our town.

Charter Review Committee

The second opportunity will be applying for the nine-person Charter Review Committee which the Charter requires to be appointed every seven years. The first committee was appointed in 1997, the second in 2004 and the third will be appointed in 2011. The Charter Review Committee is responsible for making recommendations for amendments to the existing charter. It cannot recommend basic changes to the structure of town government.

In the past the two Charter Review Committees have recommended over 30 charter changes that have been voted at Town Meeting and then voted by the voters on the May ballot. Among the adopted changes are the requirement that 1) the Board of Selectmen serve as the chief executive and policy-making board of the town and develop five-year long-range plans to be reviewed annually; 2) the Board of Selectmen act only as a collective body and shall possess no individual authority; 3) members of appointed boards be limited to three three-year terms; 4) a Rules and Procedures Committee for Town Meeting be established; 5) voting at Town Meeting be by standing not hand votes to increase visibility and accountability; and 6) the title of Town Administrator be changed to Town Manager. It was felt that the title of Town Manager would clarify the position and thereby attract the best qualified candidates in the future.

The Charter Review Committee is an important opportunity to make improvements to the constitution of our town. There are many issues needing further attention particularly as they affect the Board of Selectmen. Qualified, interested citizens willing to serve on the Charter Review Committee should apply to the Selectmen for membership.

Charter Commission

The third opportunity is to participate in the effort to create a Charter Commission. A Charter Commission differs from a Charter Review Committee in that it has the ability to recommend changes to the basic structure of town government. In 1990 it was a Charter Commission that recommended and voters adopted changing town government from an elected three member full-time, paid board of Selectmen form to its present elected five member unpaid Selectmen with an appointed Town Manager. No changes were made to Town Meeting.

Sponsors of a new Charter Commission state that the purpose of their goal is to “develop an improved form of Government for the Town of Falmouth” and say that “the present government by committee and the lack of a central leader has resulted in many citizens becoming disillusioned with the present form of Government. “ What that form will take will be recommended by the Commission after completing a lengthy process.

In order to create a Charter Commission under state law, 15% of registered town voters or approximately 4000 voters must sign a petition by Feb. 4, 2011 to put the question on the May 2011 ballot for voters to decide in favor or against. At the same election, at least nine candidates for the Commission must be on the ballot. To qualify for the ballot each of the candidates must have acquired the signatures of at least 50 town residents. Once elected, the Commission must complete its recommendations within 18 months. These are then placed on the town ballot for the acceptance or rejection by the voters.

Establishing a Charter Commission requires a major commitment from its supporters. First they must gather the necessary signatures and, if successful, must win the support of a majority of voters on the May ballot. If again successful, they must then devote approximately two years of study and an estimated \$35,000 in town funds to be able to submit their recommendations to the town and then lobby for their adoption on the town ballot. It is a deliberately complex process since changing the structure of town government is not to be undertaken lightly.

[Megan Jones is former Chair and member--Charter Review Committees (1997, 2004 respectively); current Town Meeting Member--Precinct 1; current Clerk--Town Meeting Rules and Procedure Committee; and former President Falmouth LWV.]



LWVMA Strategic Plan Town Hall Meetings

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts wants to hear from you! This past election season underscored for all of us how much our communities need the League. We are working to serve our members and our communities better and your feedback is essential. Please join us to share what you think are the key areas the League should work on, what you like and want continued, and what you feel needs improving.

We will be holding a series of “town hall” meetings across Massachusetts to hear directly from members about the issues they are concerned about. There are two formats we will use, an online option and a face to face option. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the state Office at 617-523-2999.

Schedule of Meetings for January 2011

Date & Times	Location	Leagues
January 4 4pm to 5:30pm 6pm to 7:30pm	Plymouth	Southern Leagues and eastern/southern coastal Leagues
January 10 4pm to 5:30pm 6pm to 7:30pm	Northampton	Western Leagues
January 10 4pm to 5:30pm 6pm to 7:30pm	Topsfield	Northern Leagues
January 11 4pm to 5:30pm 6pm to 7:30pm	Natick	Metro Boston Leagues
January 5 7pm to 8:30pm	Online	All Leagues
January 6 7pm to 8:30pm	Online	All Leagues
January 13 7pm to 8:30pm	Online	All Leagues

[from <http://www.lwvma.org/StrategicPlanFocusGroups.shtml>]

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January 2011 Bulletin



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